DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 084 171 SO 006 181

TITLE	Guidelines for the Evaluation and Selection of Textbooks in the Treatment of Minorities (Especially in Social Studies).
INSTITUTION	New Mexico State Dept. of Education, Santa Fe.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	15 May 73
NOTE	9p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Check Lists; Ethnic Groups; *Evaluation Criteria; Guidelines; *Minority Groups; *Social Studies; *Textbook Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	*New Mexico

ABSTRACT

This document, part of which is in checklist form, sets forth a set of criteria for analyzing materials which are relevant for the education of minority groups. The checklist itself consists of 29 items, each of which must be judged on a scale ranging from "superior" to "not pertinent." Some sample evaluation questions are: (does the book) 1) include materials on minorities where relevant?; 2) reflect respect for personal and cultural differences and the worth and importance of the individual?; 3) give attention to holidays, festivals, religious observances of various minority groups without stereotyping? A list of six references is given. (OPH)

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JUL 20 1973

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GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION AND SELECTION

OF TEXTBOOKS

IN THE TREATMENT OF MINORITIES

(ESPECIALLY IN SOCIAL STUDIES)

SP 006 181

TITLE IV-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNIT

NEW MEXICO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PUBLIC LAW 88-352

NEW MEXICO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TITLE IV-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UNIT

STAFF

HENRY W. PASCUAL, DIRECTOR
JEAN SALAS, SPANISH SPECIALIST
RINA SWENTZELL, INDIAN SPECIALIST

MAY 15, 1973

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In the past a major effort of the public schools has been directed toward what can be termed "Americanization" of the school population. This puts great emphasis upon building a common culture and molding individuals to fit that culture. Conformity rather than diversity has been stressed.

Today, there is a growing emphasis upon diversity, the role of minority groups in our society, and the contributions which they have made and are making to the general American culture.

The key factor, as in all education, is the teacher. From the time the child starts kindergarten until he finishes school, the teacher sets the tone of the classroom. A truly perceptive teacher will find many opportunities to help pupils develop an understanding and appreciation of the contributions of members of minority groups to our culture. Not only social studies, but language, literature, music, art and many other subjects offer opportunities for achieving this goal. Of great importance are the materials which pupils use. Textbooks, library resources, tapes, films and other audio-visual materials should be as accurate and unbiased as possible. Here there is much to be done since many of the materials used in the schools have reflected stereotypes and biases which are unfair and invalid. It must be realized that much conflict and bitter controversy in the American society exists because millions of people have never had access to valid information regarding peoples of different ethnic, national, religious, social, political and economic groups.

If our nation is to capitalize on the strengths of its diverse population, we must have access to factual knowledge and intelligent interpretation of the factors which support diversity.

This specific set of criteria may be useful for analyzing materials which are relevant for the education of the minority groups. Teachers could then summarize and use these reactions as a basis for discussion and elimination of the questionable materials in the selection process.

GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF TEXTBOOKS

SOCIAL STUDIES

I. If material on minorities is important to the consideration of the subject, it should be presented. Some minority group problems are not necessarily involved in all aspects of Social Studies instruction and should not be artificially injected.

II. The treatment of minorities should reflect a respect for personal and cultural differences and the dignity of the individual as well as the ethnic group.

III. Information relative to minorities should be accurate and complete.

IV. All aspects of a subject should be treated adequately.

CHECKLIST FOR THE COLLECTION OF TEXTBOOKS

SOCIAL STUDIES

Title of Book_____ Name of evaluator_____

Author_____ Grade level_____

Publisher_____

Date, edition (revised or new) and cost

	S*	A	U	NP	Page References
1. Includes materials on minorities where relevant					
2. Reflects respect for personal and cultural differences and the worth and importance of the individual.					
3. Offers factual, realistic, mature treatment of the topics.					
4. Gives balanced treatment of past and present (history, culture, life styles, etc.)					
5. Presents accurate, pertinent information.					
6. Deals fairly with past and present issues and problems.					
7. Presents varied points of view.					
8. Develops concepts of pluralistic society.					
9. Shows cultural diversity in illustrative materials. (Altering illustrations does not constitute a balanced treatment.)					
10. Includes cultural diversity in text material, both in print and pictorially.					
11. Emphasizes both positive and negative aspects.					
12. Avoids distortion and bias.					
13. Avoids use of name-calling or emotionally charged words.					
14. Supports generalizations with the specific and the concrete.					
15. Avoids myths and stereotypes.					
16. Aids in building positive attitudes and understandings.					
17. Distinguishes between fact and opinion.					

		S*	A	U	NP	Page References
18.	Gives attention to holidays, festivals, religious observances of various minority groups without stereotyping.					
19.	Encourages classroom use of additional multicultural and ethnic learning situations.					
20.	Includes the contributions of minority groups to the developing cultural scene.					
21.	World History studies textbooks include comparative treatment of various cultures in the world.					
22.	If book is part of a series, information and concepts about each minority group are introduced and developed at each grade level.					
23.	Ethnic heroes are frequently discussed, including active reformers and those who have opposed the status quo.					
24.	Textbook reinforces and encourages minority student's cultural identify, life styles and positive self-image.					
25.	Book indicates the various ways that territories became part of the U.S.					
26.	Textbook shows the role of prejudice and discrimination in U.S. History and society.					
27.	The author describes and illustrates the active participation of ethnic groups in the building of the nation.					
28.	The text fosters intergroup understanding.					
29.	Textbook shows the internal diversity of minority groups which make up our society.					

*S = Superior
A = Acceptable
U = Unacceptable
NP = Not pertinent

References

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Early Elementary School Level
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Michigan Department of Education January, 1972

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Office of General Education
South Carolina State Department of Education
Columbia, South Carolina